

Summer officially arrived in Washington, DC last week with record breaking temperatures approaching 100 degrees. Even without the haze and humidity, the political heat was surely pushing up the mercury when U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder sat on a Capitol Hill hot seat facing charges of contempt of Congress. This closely followed President Obama's two recent controversial decisions challenging the authority our Constitution gives the legislative branch of government.

The warm front blew across the Potomac on June 15 with President Obama's out of the blue announcement that his administration would not enforce certain immigration laws. In effect, his action would allow as many as 800,000 illegal immigrants, currently younger than 30 who came to this country before they were age 16, to remain in the United States to live and work for at least two more years. I actually first learned of this breaking news from a constituent during our Point Clear town meeting.

In the waning days of 2010, then Speaker Nancy Pelosi pushed through the House legislation known as the DREAM Act, which would have provided illegal immigrants under 30 a path to citizenship. I, along with a majority of Republicans, opposed this legislation. The DREAM Act was ultimately stopped in the Senate by a Republican-led filibuster, frustrating the Obama administration.

By selectively refusing to enforce current immigration law, the Obama White House has signaled its own contempt of Congress and its authority to make laws. It is difficult to conclude that the president's decision is anything more than a political move given its timing and the fact that the administration has had three years to pass the DREAM Act. A lawsuit will likely be filed against the Obama administration for its latest refusal to enforce immigration law.

Last week, President Obama's administration again drew the ire of the House by refusing to comply with the orders of a Congressional oversight committee to provide all documents relating to the Justice Department's Operation Fast and Furious.

Since February of 2011, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee has been looking into the Justice Department's "reckless conduct" in a two year program run by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) to track 2,000 guns purchased in America and illegally transported to Mexican drug cartels. After Federal officials lost track of many of these

weapons, some were later found at crimes scenes, including the December 2010 death of Border Patrol agent Brian Terry in Arizona.

Congressional investigators have repeatedly called for all documents relating to Operation Fast and Furious only to be slow-walked and sometimes misled by the Justice Department. In February 2011, the Justice Department sent a letter to Capitol Hill stating that the "ATF makes every effort to interdict weapons that have been purchased illegally and prevent their transport to Mexico." When whistleblowers presented facts to the contrary, the Justice Department withdrew the letter and has since engaged in stalling tactics to avoid turning over requested information to Congress. Last Wednesday, President Obama ratcheted tensions up further by invoking executive privilege in refusing to provide all the documents and communications associated with Operation Fast and Furious.

Also last week, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee voted to hold Attorney General Eric Holder in contempt of Congress for his refusal to provide all documentation in the case. House Speaker John Boehner has indicated that unless the administration agrees to comply with the committee's request, the full House will vote this week to hold Attorney General Holder in contempt.

### **Voting for More Domestic Energy:**

While pump prices have eased slightly in recent weeks, Alabamians are still paying around \$3.13 a gallon for gas. The best way to tackle high energy costs is for Washington to get behind a national energy policy that emphasizes more domestic fuel production and reduces our dependence on foreign oil.

Last Thursday, the House passed the Domestic Energy and Jobs Act by a vote of 248 to 163. I was pleased to support this legislation, which combines seven bills to spur economic growth and job creation.

The House continues to push for an all-of-the-above energy strategy to meet the needs of our economy now and in the future. Furthermore, we strongly support the Keystone XL Pipeline to provide more American jobs and increase our access to abundant oil from Canada.

Since January 2011, the House has passed over 30 other bills to kick start jobs through regulatory relief and increased domestic energy production, yet the Senate has stalled them in the interest of partisan politics.

My staff and I work for you. If we can ever be of service, do not hesitate to call my office toll free at 1-800-288-8721.

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